1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

881 the chief must not be used by him to buy a wife. This would pollute the village (makhuma). It would cause unfortunate births (timbeleko) and ruin the life of the people.

The chameleon procession is performed in the villages of the main headmen of the tribe during the few following days till, at last, the ochre of the initiated is removed and they return home definitely.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CIRCUMCISION SCHOOL

177 881 341 822 881 The square form of the sungi sheds, so different from the circular form adopted by the Bantus for their homes and implements, might be the trace of a Semitic influence. But, on the whole, all these rites are closely connected together and their sequence is quite easy to understand.

The Ngoma is truly a puberty rite, but not a sexual initiation. The suspension of conjugal relations, and the prevalence of licentious language might give the idea that it is in direct relation with the sexual life. But these two phenomena are met with on other occasions, as we shall see, and seem to be characteristic occurrences in most of the marginal periods. Moreover boys of ten and twelve and men of twenty-five or more can occasionally be admitted to the sungi, and this proves that the school has nothing to do with marriage, properly speaking. Neither is the Ngoma a pure act of aggregation to a definite clan. Boys of one clan often go to the sungi of another chief to be initiated ; they do not become his subjects by so doing. Even Thongas sometimes enter into Sutho lodges and Ma-Lemba have a special place in them. It is true that the Ngoma is the business of the chief. Only those who are really chiefs have the right to build a lodge. But though the initiated are exhorted to become good subjects of their chief, the intention of the circumcision school is rather to introduce the little boy *into manhood*, to cleanse him from the *bukhuma* (p. 58) to make him a thoughtful adult member of the community.

(See practical conclusion on Circumcision Rites at the end of Vol. I.)

II. *Other Puberty Rites.*

881 178 The Ngoma has disappeared in most of the Thonga clans, but there are a few other puberty rites which have been preserved all through the tribe.

301 789 Beads are merely an ornament and have no ritual value, except the large white ones used by people possessed by the Ba-Ndjao spirits. (Part VI.)

B. HABITATION.

342 While there has been such a rapid change in Thonga customs regarding dress, — so rapid that in these last fifty years they have changed more in that respect than during the fifty preceding centuries —, in the field of architecture the tribe appears to have stood still ; their huts are built precisely as they were in ancient times. It is true that it is easier to put on a jacket and trousers than to alter the style of one's house : besides it must be admitted that the Thonga hut possesses several advantages. It is comparatively easy to construct, cool in the hot weather, perfectly watertight in the rainy season and is fairly ingeniously contrived.

That which is called *yindlu* (yin-tin) properly speaking, is more especially the *roof* of the hut (lwango, dji-ma) ; for it is the roof which is the most troublesome to make. A strange fact too, and one which appears paradoxical, is that, in the construction (ku yaka) of the house, they begin with the roof!

[341] 335 342 The Thonga architect — and every man is his own in that country — gathers together a few hundred straight sticks, one to one and a half inches in width and from three to ten feet in length. He digs a hole in the ground, a yard and a half in diameter and 16 inches deep, in which he arranges his sticks in a circle, points downwards, at the bottom of the hole, and supported in such a manner that they lie at an angle of 45 degrees with the ground. Any one of these sticks will thus be at about a right angle with the opposite one, and all together they form, as it were, a huge conical basket with its point in the hole. To fasten all the sticks together, he ties them to round hoops (something like cask hoops) made of bent branches. These hoops (balelo, dji-ma) are concentric, very small at the bottom, and getting gradually larger as the work progresses. Any spaces which remain between the sticks first arranged are filled up, one after the other, with